

Message Text

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64

ACTION ARA-20

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R 211650Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7863

INFO DOD/ISA WASHDC

DA WASHDC

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS CZ

SECDEF WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

USARSO FT AMADOR CZ

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 1385

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, MARR

SUBJECT: ARMS AND THE CHILEAN ARMY

REF: SANTIAGO 1328

1. SUMMARY: CHILEAN JUNTA SENDS OFFICER TO WASHINGTON TO IMPRESS ON STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS URGENCY OF ITS REQUIREMENTS FOR TANKS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING COURTESY CALL MARCH 19, DEFENSE MINISTER VICE ADMIRAL PATRICIO CARVAJAL PRADO SOLICITED AMBASSADOR'S ASSISTANCE IN RELAYING TO WASHINGTON THE CHILEAN ARMED FORCES NEEDS FOR MODERNIZATION. IN PARTICULAR ADMIRAL CARVAJAL STATED BGEN NILO FLOODY, DIRECTOR MILITARY INSTITUTIONS AND THE SENIOR ARMOR OFFICER IN THE CHILEAN ARMY, WOULD ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON ON APRIL 5 TO DISCUSS WITH MEMBERS OF STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENTS THE NECESSITY FOR AN IMMEDIATE PURCHASE OF TANKS. GENERAL FLOODY WAS PRESENT DURING CALL AND EXPLAINED
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HOW CHILE IN ALLENDE DAYS HAD BEEN OFFERED RUSSIAN

TANKS AT A VERY ATTRACTIVE PRICE, IN FACT FLOODY SAID "VERY CHEAP" BUT CHILEAN ARMY HAD ELECTED NOT TO BRING RUSSIAN EQUIPMENT INTO CHILE AND SOUTH AMERICA. NOW, HOWEVER, PERU HAS NEGOTIATED WITH RUSSIANS AND IS RECEIVING SIZEABLE QUANTITIES OF TANKS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. FLOODY SAID IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT CHILE HAVE A CAPABLE DEFENSE AGAINST TANKS PERUVIANS ARE NOW DEPLOYING. FLOODY, ACCOMPANIED BY LTC HANS ZIPPELIUS AND MAJOR BAUTISTA MOLL, WILL MAKE THIS CASE IN WASHINGTON. WE UNDERSTAND AMBASSADOR HEITMANN AND THE CHILEAN MILITARY ATTACHES HAVE ARRANGED APPOINTMENTS FOR GENERAL FLOODY.

3. COMMENT: DAO AND MILGP UNDERSTAND THAT GENERAL FLOODY WILL BE DISCUSSING ACQUISITION OF M60 TANKS, A QUANTITY OF SELF-PROPELLED ARTILLERY WEAPONS, AND THE TOW ANTI-TANK MISSILE (REFTEL). CHILEAN ARMED FORCES ARE ALARMED OVER THE RUSSIAN WEAPONS AND TECHNICIANS IN PERU AND RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY CONSIDER THEM A DIRECT THREAT TO NORTHERN CHILE.

4. WE ARE BEGINNING TO EXPERIENCE STEPPED-UP PRESSURE FROM CHILEAN AUTHORITIES FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE FORCE MODERNIZATION THEY CONSIDER NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN THEIR MILITARY POSITION VIS-A-VIS THEIR NEIGHBORS. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, CHILEANS ARE FEELING AGGRIEVED BY WIDESPREAD CONDEMNATION IN THE US AND WESTERN EUROPE OF THE JUNTA AND ITS PRACTICES, AND IT SEEMS TO ME ARE CONSEQUENTLY EXAMINING US GOVERNMENT ACTS IN ARMS AND OTHER AREAS WITH INCREASING SENSITIVITY. I RECOGNIZE INTRICACY OF PROBLEM INVOLVED AT WASHINGTON END IN AUTHORIZING ARMS SHIPMENTS TO CHILE. BUT FROM STANDPOINT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS I WOULD RECOMMEND EMBASSY BE PERMITTED TO COMMUNICATE TO CHILEANS SOME TANGIBLE GESTURES IN DIRECTION OF ASSISTING THEM WITH FORCE MODERNIZATION IN VERY NEAR FUTURE. END COMMENT
POPPER

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